

From: Sean Branney
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/20/01 12:36pm
Subject: MS Anti-Trust

Dear Department of Justice,

As a long time member of the IT community, I have watched with horror and dread as Microsoft has extended its tendrils throughout the industry, wielding its monopoly with self-serving glee. I was very pleased to see the United States stand up to their illegal practices and enforce the law.

While I'm not familiar with all of the intricacies of the case, I've followed reporting on the settlement in the news. I must say that the settlement seems absurdly lenient to Microsoft, and I have no doubt that if the settlement is agreed to, Microsoft will continue to misuse their position of dominance in the industry and some future government administration will be forced to find a meaningful settlement.

Stop for a moment to consider what a genuinely incredible tool the Internet is. It is genuinely changing the world in a meaningful and positive way. However, Microsoft has positioned themselves to co-opt the Internet itself and make it little more than a profit center for them. Consider that most of the world now accesses the Internet through their tools. There's an ever-dwindling number of options available as they eliminate their competitors. Microsoft alone has the clout and influence to set the standards as to how the Internet will work in the future. Will they select the "best" technology that best serves mankind or will they select standards that will serve Microsoft shareholders?

Obviously Microsoft will pursue their profits. However, the point of the anti-trust litigation, it seems to me, is to eliminate unfair practices and break up a monopoly which has the power to affect the very future of humanity. The proposed settlement terms seem like a weak and ineffectual gesture rather than a meaningful stand to protect the Internet as a dynamic, diverse, robust marketplace for human ideas and communication.

Thank you for soliciting public input on this matter.

Sean Branney
Glendale, CA